

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3744

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PERSONAL FOR EA/ANP AMBASSADOR GREEN

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MILI, AS, US

SUBJECT: MILITARY SUBJECTS FOR YOUR MEETING WITH JCS

1. DAO HAS PREPARED FOLLOWING ADDITIONAL MATERIAL
WHICH MAY BE OF BACKGROUND USE FOR YOUR MEETING
JULY 26.

2. REORGANIZATION OF THE AUSTRALIAN DOD. ON
30 NOVEMBER 1973 THE REPORT ON THE REORGANIZATION OF
THE AUSTRALIAN DEFENSE GROUP OF DEPARTMENTS (TANGE
REPORT) WAS TABLED IN PARLIAMENT BY THE PM. UNDER THE
OLD ORGANIZATION THERE WAS DIRECT ACCESS TO THE MINISTER
BY THE SERVICES SINCE THE MOD WAS ALSO SERVICE MINISTER
FOR EACH DEPARTMENT. COORDINATION WAS ACCOMPLISHED AS
REQUIRED WITH THE SECRETARY, DOD. SERVICE ACCESS TO THE
MINISTER WAS ALSO POSSIBLE THROUGH THE CHIEFS OF STAFF
COMMITTEE. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT WAS HANDLED WITHIN EACH
SERVICE THROUGH THE SERVICE SECRETARY. THE DOD STAFF
WAS A SERIES OF SEPARATE FIRST ASSISTANT SECRETARIES
WITH NO GROUPING BASED ON FUNCTIONS OR RESPONSIBILITIES.
THE NEW ORGANIZATION INCORPORATES GUIDELINES ANNOUNCED
BY THE LABOR GOVERNMENT UPON ASSUMING POWER IN DECEMBER
1972. THESE ARE:

- A SINGLE DOD INCORPORATING THE STAFF NOW IN THE
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SERVICE AND DEFENSE DEPARTMENTS.

- THE SEPARATE IDENTITY OF THE NAVY, ARMY AND AIR FORCE IS TO BE MAINTAINED.

- ESTABLISHMENT UNDER CENTRAL FUNCTIONAL CONTROL SOME ASPECTS OF SUPPLY, PERSONNEL AND OTHER POLICIES WHICH HAVE IN THE PAST BEEN MANAGED BY THEIR SERVICE DEPARTMENTS.

- ESTABLISH MORE EFFECTIVE CONTROL OF OPERATIONS AND RELATED ACTIVITIES.

- IMPROVE PRESENTATION TO PARLIAMENT OF THE NATURE AND COST OF VARIOUS DEFENSE FUNCTIONS CARRIED OUT IN THE SERVICE DEPARTMENTS.

3. MORALE IN THE ARMED FORCES. PRESS AND WEEKLY NEWS MAGAZINES HAVE SUGGESTED THAT INCREASED RESIGNATIONS FROM THE ARMED FORCES AND ESPECIALLY THE ARMY REFLECT DISSATISFACTION WITH LABOR GOVERNMENT DEFENSE POLICIES. WHILE THERE IS SOME BASIS TO THESE CLAIMS, THE REAL REASON MAY BE DISSATISFACTION WITH ORGANIZATIONAL TRENDS IN THE DOD WHICH PLACES REAL AUTHORITY IN THE HANDS OF DOD PUBLIC SERVANTS AND DENIGRATES THE ROLE OF SENIOR UNIFORMED ADVISORS. SINCE THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE LABOR GOVERNMENT IN DECEMBER 1972 AND THE SUBSEQUENT ESTABLISHMENT OF A VERY FAVORABLE RETIREMENT SCHEME PATTERNED AFTER THE US SCHEME, THERE HAS BEEN AN INCREASED NUMBER OF RESIGNATIONS FROM THE SERVICES. SINCE 1 JANUARY 1974 RESIGNATIONS IN THE RANK OF MAJOR/ LIEUTENANT COLONEL HAVE AVERAGED ONE A DAY. THESE INCREASING RESIGNATIONS (EARLY RETIREMENT BEFORE MANDATORY RETIREMENT) HAVE ALLEGEDLY BEEN BASED ON POOR MORALE BECAUSE OF LABOR GOVERNMENT DEFENSE POLICIES WHICH:

--- REDUCED THE STRENGTH OF THE ARMED FORCES.

--- ESTABLISHED A NO-THREAT STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENT OVER THE NEXT 15 YEARS.
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--- PROVIDED AN UNCERTAIN FUTURE FOR EQUIPMENT MODERNIZATION AND REPLACEMENT.

THIS SITUATION REACHED A HIGH POINT RECENTLY WITH THE EARLY RETIREMENT OF TWO MAJOR GENERALS AND A BRIGADIER. THE CHIEF OF THE GENERAL STAFF, LIEUTENANT GENERAL F. G. HASSETT MADE A PRESS RELEASE DISCOUNTING PRESS SPECULATION

AND BASING THE EARLY RETIREMENTS ON BETTER CONDITIONS OF SERVICE AND NOT MORALE. IRONICALLY THE IMPROVED CONDITIONS OF SERVICE (PENISON SCHEME) INSTITUTED BY THE LABOR GOVERNMENT HAVE BECOME THE VEHICLE BY WHICH SENIOR OFFICERS CAN HAVE THE FREEDOM TO BE SEPARATED FROM THE SERVICE AS A FORM OF PROTEST. THE SPECIFIC TARGET OF CRITICISM WAS SIR ARTHUR TANGE WHO AS FAR BACK AS 1970 IN THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE JOINT INTELLIGENCE ORGANIZATION HAD INUSRED CIVILIAN CONTROL OF THAT ORGANIZATION. THE DOD REORGANIZATION SCHEME WHICH TANGE AUTHORED WAS THE FINAL INSULT TO SENIOR SERVICEG UNIFORMED OFFICERS FOR IT PLACES ALMOST TOTAL CONTROL OF THE DOD AND SERVICE DEPARTMENTS IN CIVILIAN HANDS.
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